

Revelation 10

1 And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

This is another parenthetical vision concerning the events which will take place in the spiritual realm, between the sixth and seventh trumpets, towards the middle of the Tribulation period. John sees a “mighty angel”. This angel is described as being clothed with a cloud (symbolic of God’s glory), wearing a rainbow-like crown (the rainbow is usually a sign of God’s covenant with man), his face shone as bright as the sun, and his feet were ablaze like columns of fire. Some have suggested, because of this description, that this “mighty angel” must be Christ, since His face shone like the sun and His feet were like bronze according to Revelation 1:15-16.

Revelation 1:15-16 **And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.**

This is unlikely for the following reasons. John had seen Jesus in various visionary forms and had walked with Him during His earthly ministry, therefore it does not seem possible that he would describe the Saviour as a “mighty angel”; added to this is the fact that no New Testament verse speak of Him as an angel. We should leave the text as it is – the “mighty angel” is simply one of the highest orders of God’s angels. This means that the “mighty angel” is a powerful angel who reflects the glory of God, otherwise we fall into the same trap as the Jehovah’s Witnesses have regarding Michael being Jesus. Daniel saw exactly the same angel in his vision (Daniel 10:5-8; 12:7).

2 And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,

In this angel's hand is a little scroll opened. This scroll possibly contains the record of the coming judgements on the earth during the last years of world history. It is also possible that the book, or scroll, is the title deed of the earth. The angel is seen placing a foot on the land and on the sea. Commentators, eager to see the angel as Jesus Christ, suggest that this is a sign claiming total dominion. Instead, given the details of this chapter, it is a sign of the completeness of God's judgement on earth. The angel is merely God's representative sent to challenge Satan.

3 And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

The angel lets out a loud shout which sounded like the roaring of a lion to the apostle John. Along with the shout came the sound of seven thunders. This thunder should be accepted as being the voices of other angelic beings in Heaven.

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

John instantly interpreted these voices. He thought that he was supposed to write down what was said, but was commanded not to do so. This is very similar to Daniel being forbidden to write what he heard and saw (Daniel 12:4,9).

Daniel 12:4,9 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. [9] And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

This part of the Revelation is God's secret, but there is obviously an appointed time for its fulfilment (Revelation 22:10; Daniel 8:26-27).

Revelation 22:10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

Daniel 8:26-27 And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days. And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.

We cannot surmise what it is all about – only God knows these things – “The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us” (Deuteronomy 29:29).

5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

The mighty angel lifts up his hand as though he was about to make an important proclamation.

6 And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

He spoke in the name of the only true God (not any ‘god’ as in Pantheism, but in name of Almighty God, the Creator). He declared that all things were about to come to an end, that there is no further delay in pouring out God’s final judgement. The words ‘time no longer’ here means ‘without delay’ rather than the cessation of time itself, since there is still the 1,000 year reign of Christ to come. The seventh trumpet judgement must now be unleashed upon the world, for there is nothing to hinder it now that mankind has thoroughly rejected God. Soon the Lord would answer the disciple’s question about the timing of the establishment of Christ’s Earthly Kingdom (Matthew 24:3; Acts 1:6-7).

Matthew 24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

Acts 1:6-7 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

It would be the seventh angel who would actually make the announcement regarding the world's final hours. This would be the fulfilment of all the Biblical prophecies regarding the last days events. It is also a looking forward to the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom or as the text states, "the mystery of God", when Christ will take ownership of the whole earth.

8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

John is told to take the scroll from the mighty angel's hand. This is a visionary enactment rather than a physical event, though obviously just as real to John.

9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

John asks the angel to give him the scroll. This was to be eaten. This is symbolic of meditating and thinking on the Word of God, but in this case especially the events of the last days. Jeremiah

used a similar expression regarding the Word of God (Jeremiah 15:16).

10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

The scroll was sweet to the taste, but after digesting it, John found it turned sour in his stomach. The messages contained in the Book of Revelation (including Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel) have much joy, glory, peace and comfort for the reader, but they also contain descriptions of the most horrendous times in world history. Is this the reason so few study Revelation today?

11 And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

The apostle John would prophesy – speak of these very things – to many people. Through his writings he would reach down into the final hours of time and preach the truth. We must take the teachings of Revelation to this world, for the torch of responsibility is now ours. We too are commissioned to prophesy, not new things, but those revealed in this book. We are living in the only time in history when all the signs and prophecies are converging, therefore we must warn both the church and the world before it is too late.